

## FRG leader's idea brings java from home

By Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie  
2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq - Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd

Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI) gathered for the grand opening of "Cuppa Joes" at Camp Striker, Iraq on Dec. 24.

Cuppa Joes first started off

as an idea for a simple coffee shop, but turned into much more, incorporating the strength of Soldiers with the love from home.

"Cuppa Joes was an idea

that was born to me when my husband and I were thinking about what we could have done (for the Soldiers) during his last deployment," said Andrea Aitken, the 1-89 senior family readiness advisor, and native of Tulsa, Okla.

Aitken's idea allowed families to focus on something other than the deployment - a project that would boost the morale of the Soldiers and provide them with a comfort of home in a foreign land.

"One of my friends, Anna, was committed to helping on the home-front," Aitken said.

Just a couple of months before the squadron deployed, a new chaplain joined the team and took the idea of Cuppa Joes to Iraq. He immediately began getting supplies such as wood, hammers and nails to make the coffee shop a reality for the Soldiers. He also recruited 1-89 Soldiers to help build the shop.

"I helped to gather the sup-



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) Public Affairs)

Pfc. Victor Calhoun (left), and Pvt. Jonathan Ballenger both with the 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI), sing Christmas carols at the grand opening of "Cuppa Joes" as Sgt. Richard Relyea (right), also with the 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI), looks on.

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## 1st Air Cavalry Brigade CSM coach, role model for Soldiers

By Sgt. 1st Class Rick Emert  
1st ACB Public Affairs

TAJI, Iraq - Following in the footsteps of a past brigade command sergeant major is difficult enough.

But the top noncommissioned officer of the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Air Cavalry Brigade took that position Nov. 15 - the day the brigade assumed authority of the Multinational Division-Baghdad aviation mission in Iraq from the 4th Infantry

Division's Combat Aviation Brigade.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Spiva, a native of Sutter Creek, Calif., replaced Command Sgt. Maj. Donald R. Sanders.

"[Sanders] built a good team," Spiva said. "He put a lot of Soldiers in the right places and built a fine team. I plan to continue fine tuning that as the mission here requires."

Spiva is no stranger to the 1st ACB; he was the top NCO of the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade's 4th Battalion, 227th Aviation

Regiment - previously the 1st Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, 1st Armored Division, based in Hanau, Germany.

Those who know him and those who have worked for him say the enlisted Soldiers from the brigade have, in Spiva, a role model who lives and breathes the Army values.

"He is the epitome of what a Soldier is," said 1st Sgt. J. D. Sellers, a native of

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# Airmen build future with present mission

By Pfc. William Hatton  
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - There are many things that go into constructing buildings that troops live and work in while serving in Iraq. In order for

offices, chow halls and barracks to become a reality, someone drew plans, ordered supplies and constructed every room.

Airmen from the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron out of

Hurlburt, Fla., are building offices for fellow airmen.

Right behind the Multi-National Division - Baghdad headquarters building, airmen are building four small offices so that other service members can expand and further complete the mission at hand, said Senior Airman Luis Villarreal, a civil engineer from the 1st SOCES.

"Being out here and having the opportunity to apply what I've trained for is something that I enjoy," he said. "I have the opportunity to apply my knowledge and experience while I'm here"

Applying what he learned at technical school makes being in Iraq constructing buildings something enjoyable, said Airman Nick Soracco, a civil engineer with the 1st SOCES.

Of course, being with friends makes the job even better, he added.

"We're all close out here," Soracco said. "We spend a lot

of hours together working, and with that comes a lot of camaraderie."

The new building will give them a place to report to while doing their regular job of

base maintenance like fixing broken doors and windows.

"It's our chance to really learn what we're meant to do. It's also nice because we get the opportunity to get our hands dirty," he added.

One of the hardest parts of the job is the manual labor. "Hammering all day can really wear you out," Soracco said.

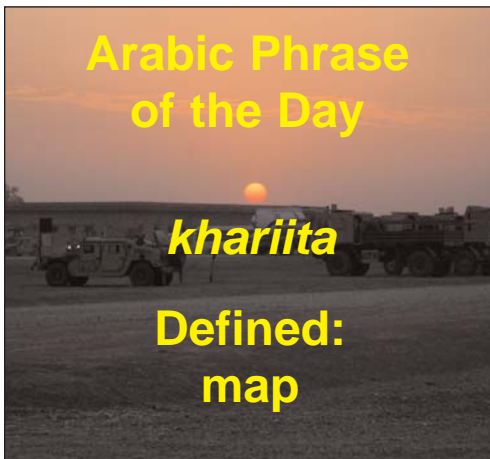
When the building is complete and everything has been done, from electric to plumbing, the feeling of having completed the mission is exhilarating, Villarreal said.

"You really get a sense of what you've done when you come out to a site like this, that is just dirt, and when you finish there are offices so people can complete their mission," Villarreal said.



(Photo by Pfc. William Hatton, 7th MPAD)

Airman Benjamin Rasine and Airman Nick Soracco, civil engineers with the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron, out of Hurlburt, Fla., measure out lengths for an office building being built at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



## Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 56  
Low: 29



Tomorrow

High: 57  
Low: 29



Thursday

High: 59  
Low: 28

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(Photo by Spc. Nathan J. Hoskins, 1st ACB Public Affairs)

**Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Spiva, the top enlisted Soldier for the 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., addresses Soldiers at the brigade's newcomer's briefing at Camp Taji, Iraq.**

## CSM mentors troops

**Spiva**

From Page 1

Ballston Spa, N.Y., and the acting command sergeant major for 4-227th. "He lives the Army Values and instills pride in the Soldiers working for him, the Soldiers he mentors and even Soldiers that he comes in contact with. He is definitely a lead-from-the-front NCO."

"His standards are the Army standards; he has always been a firm believer in the Army standards," said 1st Sgt. Mark Wouters, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4-227th.

Sellers said Spiva expects no more - or no less - than what he himself gives to the Army and the 1st ACB.

"He expects the Soldiers of the 1st ACB to live the Army Values, abide by the Soldiers' Creed and

Warrior Ethos, take pride in the Warrior Brigade and always do what is right," Sellers said.

Although he has stepped up to brigade level, his expectations of Soldiers are the same.

"The [4-227th] Soldiers all liked him, because he was a fair individual. If we didn't meet his standards he would let us know. He corrects you if you do something wrong, but when Soldiers do something good, he is the first one there to praise them."

With a month as the brigade's top NCO behind him, Spiva said he likes what he sees in his Soldiers.

"We have great Soldiers with great training and motivation," Spiva said. "They are [working hard] to get the mission done. The great leaders and Soldiers of the Warrior Brigade are all pulling their share of the load to make our mission here successful."

## Paratroopers provide security for city council meeting

**By Sgt. Marcus Butler  
4-25 Inf. Public Affairs**

ISKANDARIYAH, Iraq - Paratroopers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division provided

security for the first meeting of the Jurf as Sakhr City Council at an Iraqi police station in Tahrir, Iraq Dec. 20.

The meeting was held so that the representatives from Jurf as Sakhr, which represents the needs for approximately 50,000 people, could come

together to work out issues facing the city.

The original location for the meeting was to be held in Jurf as Sakhr, but due to security reasons, the city council decided to move the location to Tahrir.

Dispatched to provide security for this mission were the first and third platoons from Company C.

"This meeting was very important and safety was our first priority," said Capt. Don L. Kingston, Jr., the company commander.

"This meeting of the Jurf as Sakhr council was to be completely run by the council," added Kingston. "We were there for security measures only."

During the meeting, various representatives brought forth suggestions and questions

about future plans.

"Our goal is not to do everything for them. We will provide them with the skill and knowledge for what they need and help them with whatever else we can," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Toscano, with the battalion's civil affairs team.

Capt. Scott Nelson, commander for Company A, was the primary advocate for the council meeting, listening to the issues and plans brought up.

"The turn out was not what we expected," said Kingston. "A lot of the major council members did not show, but a lot of the surrounding village representatives did, which was a good thing."

This council meeting is the first step in the right direction for establishing a more structured government system, said Toscano.



(Photo by Sgt. Marcus Butler, 4-25 Inf. Public Affairs)

**Staff Sgt. Jason Boyle, a native of Crestline, Calif., stares out over the town of Tahrir, Iraq providing security for the first meeting of the Jurf as Sakhr City Council.**

# Troops find comfort, taste of home at Cuppa Joes

## Java

From Page 1

plies for the shop, but the Soldiers built it," said Chaplain (Capt.) Danny Wilson, the 1-89 chaplain and native of St. Joseph, Miss. "But it was the FRG that gave us the idea."

Although "Cuppa Joes" was intended to just be a coffee shop, Command Sgt. Maj. Fred Morris, the 1-89 command sergeant major and native of Port Charlotte, Fla., envisioned something more, which led to the addition of a television screen, games and snacks at the shop.

"It started off as a coffee shop," Morris said as he pointed to the large television screen. "But we added some other things for the Soldiers. We are going to have movie theme nights here."

Having free food and coffee will give Soldiers who are on missions during dining facility hours a place where

they cannot only eat, but relax.

"It is kind of like we have a morale, welfare and recreational center right here," Morris said.

After the shop was officially opened, Soldiers poured in to taste the coffee and took time to sit and relax with one another.

"It is nice to have this coffee shop right here ... we do not have to walk across the camp to get a cup of coffee," said Pfc. Jonathan Crump, a personal security detachment gunner with 1-89 and native of Joliet, Ill., as he sipped on a cup of coffee.

Although the Soldiers actually built the coffee shop, the support from home allowed the Soldiers to enjoy the coffee for free.

All of the coffee and condiments were donated by the friends and families of 1-89.

"The certificates of recognition (from the 1-89 command) to those who have


donated items help them know they are making a difference," Aitken said. "Wilson took a simple idea formulated at the dinner table and turned it into something more than we could

have hoped for. Perhaps the best gift is that the Soldiers are able to see how many people truly wish to help and support them by more than just words, but actions."



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) Public Affairs)

Pfc. Jonathan Crump, a personal security detachment gunner with the 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI) and native of Joliet, Ill., enjoys his first cup of coffee at the grand opening of the coffee shop "Cuppa Joes" at Camp Striker, Iraq.



**MULTINATIONAL DIVISION - BAGHDAD**  
*Presents:*  
**REV DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**  
*"A DAY ON...NOT A DAY OFF"*  
*Guest Speaker*

**Jan 15th**


■ **6 - 7:30a.m.: Fun Run/Walk**

**Prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners**


*\*Rally point for the Run/Walk will be on the cement platform next to the Camp Liberty MWR\**

• **6:30 - 8p.m.: Rev Dr. MLK, Jr. Birthday Observance**


**\*Location: Division Chapel (Camp Liberty)**




*BG Vincent Brooks  
(DCG-S)*



**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**





**S.T.O.P.P.**

**Stop** before you act, don't rush into a situation or mission without considering the risks against the benefits.

**Think** about what you are about to do, what is the right way to safely accomplish the task.

**Observe** the situation and surrounding environment. What are the Risks? How can I reduce them?

**Plan.** Develop your plan to reduce the risks and decide how to best implement the plan.

**Proceed** with Safety. Supervise continuously and Constantly look for ways to improve.



## Why I Serve:

# Aviation troop finds opportunities in America, Army

By Sgt. Robert J. Strain  
1st ACB, Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - While some Soldiers are taking opportunities offered by the Army for granted, others are taking full advantage of everything offered to them.

Spc. Laura Moran, a cook with Company E, 3rd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment of the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, is one of those Soldiers.

Moran started life in Russia. After high school, she started dating an American. They fell in love and she moved to America to get married in 1997.

She had always wanted to see the U.S., and although her marriage didn't work out, she enjoyed all the freedoms Americans have and decided to stay.

Wanting to get money for college, serve the country and become a citizen, Moran decided to join the Army in 2002.

In 2003, one of those dreams came true - she became

a naturalized U.S. citizen.

At her first duty station, Fort Irwin, Calif., Moran got the chance to see America.

It was at Fort Irwin that Moran started taking college classes.

Now, stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, and deployed to Camp Taji, Iraq, Moran is just eight or nine classes away from completing her bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

"I'm glad I've had the chance to do some classes while I'm here [in Iraq]," Moran said.

While being deployed has slowed her down a little, it has not stopped her from taking classes.

"It's challenging, but it makes me feel like I'm accomplishing something," she added.

After completing her bachelor's degree, Moran plans to continue her education in criminal justice through the Army, all the way to her master's degree.

Going to college was the first step in another one of her goals - becoming an officer.



(Photo by Sgt. Robert J. Strain, 1st ACB, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)

**Spc. Laura Moran, a cook with the 1st ACB, takes a break from work to study for her criminal justice college class. Moran is working on her bachelor's degree and is scheduled to attend Officer Candidate School in July to become a second lieutenant in the Army.**

Moran put in an application packet to the Officer Candidate School, and was accepted and scheduled to attend a class in July.

After OCS, Moran will become a second lieutenant and go to the Officer Basic Course to become an air defense artillery officer. Although the Army chose air defense for Moran, she is happy with the choice because she likes working in combat arms.

"I like the Army system," Moran said.

When Moran decides to get out of the Army, her plans are to become a teacher.

"I've always wanted to teach criminal justice," Moran said, explaining that all the teaching jobs she investigated required at least a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Whatever she decides, she said she knows the education has made her a better person.

## TELEVISION



	8:00p.m.	8:30p.m.	9:00p.m.	9:30p.m.	10:00p.m.	10:30p.m.	11:00p.m.
AFN sports	Sports Center	College Football-Rose Bowl: Michigan vs. USC					
AFN prime ATLANTIC	Headline News	ATS/Regional News	Heroes	American Dad	War at Home	Supernatural	
AFN news	MSNBC Live		MSNBC Live		Fox News Live		Studio B